

CLAIMS

1. A method for providing a personal media service, said method comprising:
 - 5 providing a user with a selection of pre-defined channels;
 - storing, in a local cache, media content of at least two pre-defined channels provided by a remote publisher;
 - receiving input from said user specifying a custom channel as a combination of at least two pre-defined channels of said selection; and
- 10 wherein play of said custom channel and both of said least two-predefined channels provided by said remote publisher is immediately available from said local cache.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein playing said cached media content of said custom channel comprises:
 - 15 playing interleaved media content of said at least two pre-defined channels that have been combined into said custom channel.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein providing said user with a selection of pre-defined channels comprises:
 - 20 displaying a list of said pre-defined channels.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein receiving input from said user comprises: dragging icons from said list representing first and second pre-defined channels to a screen area used to configure said custom channel.

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5. The method of claim 4 wherein upon playing of said custom channel, content from said first and second pre-defined channels are given substantially equal time.

10 7. The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of said pre-defined channels of said selection comprises content owned by said user.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of said pre-defined channels of said selection comprises content broadcasted via Internet.

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9. The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of said pre-defined channels of said selection comprises content broadcast via airwaves.

20 10. The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of said pre-defined channels of said selection comprises web text converted to speech.

11. The method of claim 1 further comprising: sending information specifying content of said custom channel via a network.

12. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

transmitting media content of said local cache to a remote location via a network

upon receipt of authentication information from said remote location.

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13 The method of claim 1 further comprising:

based on user input, developing information specifying a media content type to be

recorded;

monitoring content of one of said pre-defined channels;

10 analyzing said content to capture a content identification signature; and

recording and preserving said content for later play only if said content identification signature indicates correspondence to said media content type.

14. A method for providing a personal media service, said method

15 comprising:

providing a user with a group of pre-defined channels;

accepting a user selection of at least two of said pre-defined channels; and

selecting supplemental media content to interleave with media content of said at least two selected pre-defined channels; and

20 caching said selected supplemental media content along with said two pre-defined channels to make available for immediate play;

playing media content of a first one of said selected pre-defined channels interspersed with said supplemental media content.

15 The method of claim 14 wherein playing comprises:
5 maintaining a pointer within said supplemental media content;
 at selected points with said media content of said first selected pre-defined
channel, playing a portion of said supplemental media content determined by said pointer
while advancing said pointer.

16. The method of claim 14 further comprising:
10 receiving from said user information about user preferences; and
 selecting said supplemental media content based on said user preferences.

17. The method of claim 14 further comprising:
15 after playing first selected channel interspersed with said supplemental media
content, playing said second selected channel interspersed with said supplemental media
content while continuing to advance through said supplemental media content.

18. The method of claim 14 wherein selecting said supplemental media
content comprises selecting based on a current location of a portable device.
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19. The method of claim 18 further comprising:
 determining said current location employing GPS.

20. A method of providing a personal media service, said method comprising:
receiving a series of preferences from a user;
applying rules to said preferences to identify a list of pre-defined channels
5 available to said user;
displaying said list of pre-defined channels to said user; and
locally caching at least two of said pre-defined channels so that either is available
for immediate play.

10 21. The method of claim 20 further comprising:
playing media content of at least one of said pre-defined channels;
receiving a command from said user to skip a portion of said media content;
skipping said portion of said media content and then resuming playing; and
transmitting information indicating said skipped portion to a remote monitoring
15 site.

22. A method of presenting information about media content, said method
comprising:
20 accepting user input selecting said media content for immediate play;
retrieving data relating to said media content;
converting said data to speech;
playing said speech; and thereafter
playing said media content.

23. A method of providing a personalized media service, said method comprising:

5 playing media content;

detecting a first single user action simultaneous with playing of said media content; and

responsive to said first single user action, performing a first operation selected in accordance with specific media content playing simultaneous with said first single user

10 action.

24. The method of claim 23 further comprising:

after performing said first operation, receiving a second single user action; and responsive to said second single user action, performing a second operation.

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25. The method of claim 24 wherein said first and second single user actions comprise button depressions and said specific media content comprises a song.

26. The method of claim 24 wherein said second operation comprises a
20 purchase of said specific media content.

27. The method of claim 24 wherein said second operation comprises transmitting a request for user information pertaining to said specific media content.

28. A method of downloading media content, said method comprising:

5 automatically checking available disk space for local cache, responsive to said availability, determining caching depths for a plurality of channels; and
controlling downloading of said content based on said caching depths.

29. A method of downloading media content, said method comprising:

10 accepting user profile input;
applying rules to said user profile input to determine channel preferences;
responsive to said channel preferences; and
determining caching depths for a plurality of channels; and
controlling downloading of said content based on said channel caching depths.

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30. A method of downloading media content, said method comprising:

accepting user profile input;
applying rules to said user profile input to determine channel preferences;
responsive to said channel preferences, assigning relative priorities to content
20 within said plurality of channels; and
controlling downloading rate of said content based on said channel priorities.

31. The method of claim 29 further comprising:

allocating storage space for said content based on said channel caching depths.

32. The method of claim 31 further comprising:
within said allocated storage space creating dummy files to be replaced by
5 content-storing files upon downloading.

33. The method of claim 29 further comprising:
downloading to refresh already played content.

10 34. The method of claim 29 further comprising:
downloading to refresh stale content.

35. The method of claim 29 further comprising:
modifying said channel depths responsive to user selection of channels for play.

15 36. The method of claim 30 further comprising:
modifying said priorities responsive to user selection of channels for play

20 37. A method of downloading media content, said method comprising:
gathering information of selections of channels for play as made by a plurality of
users;
assigning relative priorities to content within said plurality of channels based on a
summation of said selections; and
controlling downloading rate of said content based on said channel priorities.

38. The method of claim 32 wherein assigning said priorities comprises:
assigning said priorities responsive to content type.

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39. A method for creating a simulated radio experience on a portable device with limited storage capacity, said method comprising:

caching content of a plurality of channels at a station;
accepting user input specifying selected ones of said channels for availability on
10 said portable device;
determining an allocated available storage capacity on said portable device;
pruning said selected channels to fit said storage capacity; and
transferring content of said selected channels as pruned; and
playing said transferred content on said portable device.

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40. A method for creating a simulated radio experience on a portable device with limited storage capacity, said method comprising:

accepting user input specifying a channel for availability on said portable device;
upon a first synchronization between a station and said portable device,
20 transferring content of said channel from said station to said portable device; and
upon a second synchronization between said station and said portable device,
determining which previously transferred content has already been played and
transferring further content to replace said previously played content.

41. A method for providing information to a user said method comprising:
displaying available media content organized into a tree structure; and
displaying total size of all available content under a selected node; and
5 displaying total size of all available content already in the local cache under said
node.

42. The method of claim 40 further comprising:
accepting user input; and
10 responsive to said input modifying a pre-configured caching depth.

43. A method for customizing a personal media service, said method
comprising:
displaying available media content organized into a first tree structure;
15 accepting user input selecting nodes of said first tree structure to specify a custom
channel;
displaying a representation of a second tree structure comprising said selected
nodes;
20 converting said second tree structure to a linear playlist; and
playing content in accordance with said linear playlist.

44. The method of claim 43 wherein converting comprises:
weighting playtime of content corresponding to said selected nodes in accordance
with user profile input.

45. A method for customizing a personal media service, said method comprising:

- 5 displaying available media content organized into a first tree structure;
- accepting user input selecting nodes of said first tree structure to specify a custom channel;
- displaying a representation of a second tree structure comprising said selected nodes;
- 10 accepting user input modifying said second tree structure by deleting specified nodes;
- converting said second tree structure, as modified, to a linear playlist; and
- playing content in accordance with said linear playlist.

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